

REMARKS

Claim 11 has been amended by incorporating the limitation directed to a connection to another backplane. Poole failed to disclose or suggest connecting one backplane as illustrated in Fig. 5 to another backplane. Basis for this amendment can be found in the paragraph bridging pp. 7-8, and in Fig. 2 of the PCT publication.

Claim 16 has been amended by combining it with claim 18. Neither Poole, nor Labana, teaches to ignore a control signal received in a card slot at one of its contacts if there is a signal at a lower contact of said card slot.

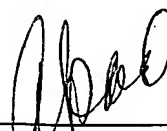
In view of these differences, applicant submits that the present invention as defined in amended claims 11 and 16 is novel and non-obvious.

Petition is hereby made for a one-month extension of the period to respond to the outstanding Official Action to February 26, 2008. A check in the amount of \$120.00, as the Petition fee, is enclosed herewith. If there are any additional charges, or any overpayment, in connection with the filing of the amendment, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any such deficiency, or credit any such overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-1145.

Wherefore, a favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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